City of Lafayette
Public Meeting Agenda
Special Meetings of
City Council
Redevelopment Agency
Downtown Strategy Advisory Committee
Circulation Commission
Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee
Creeks Committee
Design Review Commission
Environmental Task Force
Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission
Planning Commission
Senior Services Commission

Monday, April 13, 2009 **5:00 pm – 8:00 pm**
Lafayette Community Center – **Manzanita Room**
500 St. Mary's Road, Lafayette, California

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1. CALL TO ORDER
2. ROLL CALL
3. ADOPTION OF AGENDA
4. PUBLIC COMMENTS

Convene Joint Session

5. PRESENTATION
   A. **Consideration of the Draft Lafayette Downtown Strategy and Specific Plan**
   Recommendation: The Agency board should 1) receive the presentation by WRT, 2) discuss the Draft Plan with the Commissions, Committees, and WRT, 3) receive public comments, and 4) continue the discussion to a special meeting on Saturday, May 9, 2009

Adjourn Joint Session

6. ADJOURNMENT

I, Joanne Robbins, declare under penalty of perjury that this agenda has been posted at least 72 hours in advance at the Lafayette City Offices, 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 210, Lafayette, CA.

* Any writings or documents pertaining to an **open session** item provided to a majority of the City Council less than 72 hours prior to the meeting, shall be made available for public inspection at the front counter at City Hall located at 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 210, Lafayette, CA. during normal business hours.

City of Lafayette
General Information for Public Meetings

Location of Agendas and Agenda Packets: Agenda and packets are available for review by the public during regular work hours at the Lafayette City Offices, 3675 Mt. Diablo Blvd., Suite 210. Agendas and packets shall be made available at least 72 hours in advance of each meeting. Agendas and staff reports are also available on the city website www.ci.lafayette.ca.us .

Upon request, this agenda will be made available in appropriate alternative formats to persons with disabilities, as required by Section 202 of the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12132). Any person with a disability who requires a modification or accommodation in order to participate in a meeting should direct such request to Joanne Robbins, City Clerk at (925) 299-3210 at least 48 hours before the meeting, if possible.

Board1 Discussion: In accordance with State Law, the Board is generally prohibited from discussing and making decisions regarding items not posted on the agenda. Exceptions include items of urgency that become known to the Board after the posting of the agenda; discussion of such items requires a 4/5ths affirmative vote by the Board.

Persons Wishing to Speak: Any person may address the Board on any item listed on this agenda. Persons wishing to address the Board should complete a speaker slip and submit it to the City staff. In addressing the Board, speakers should step to the podium and state their names and addresses for the record.

Public Comments on Agenda Items: Persons wishing to speak on items listed on the agenda will be heard when called by the meeting chair. After the public has commented, the item will be closed to public comment and brought to the Board for discussion and action. There is no further comment permitted from the audience unless invited by the meeting chair.

Public Comments on Non-Agenda Items: Persons wishing to speak on matters not posted on this agenda are encouraged to submit the matter in writing to the City Clerk or staff aide at least ten days prior to the next regularly scheduled Board meeting date. Persons unable to do this may address the Board under the PUBLIC COMMENTS section of this agenda. Note, however, that such matters may be referred to staff for action or posted on a future agenda.

Time Limit on Comments: Persons will be permitted to speak for up to three minutes.

Posted Times: Posted times are estimated and actual times will vary. Public hearings may start later but never earlier than the posted time.

Reconsideration of Items: After the Board has acted on an agenda item, it may reconsider the same item later in the meeting in accordance with Council Rules of Proceedings II.D.4 in Resolution 2007-049.

Consent Calendar: All matters listed under consent calendar are considered to be routine and will be enacted by one motion. There will be no separate discussion of these items unless requested by a member of the Board or a member of the public prior to the time that the Board votes on the motion to adopt.

Notice Requirements: Lafayette Municipal Code Section 6-211 requires that the City provide public notice of the first public hearing for any meeting that requires public notice. If there are additional meetings, they are **not re-noticed**. Be advised that it is the responsibility of any interested party to follow the continuance date or dates, as well as to be apprised of whether project revisions have been submitted.

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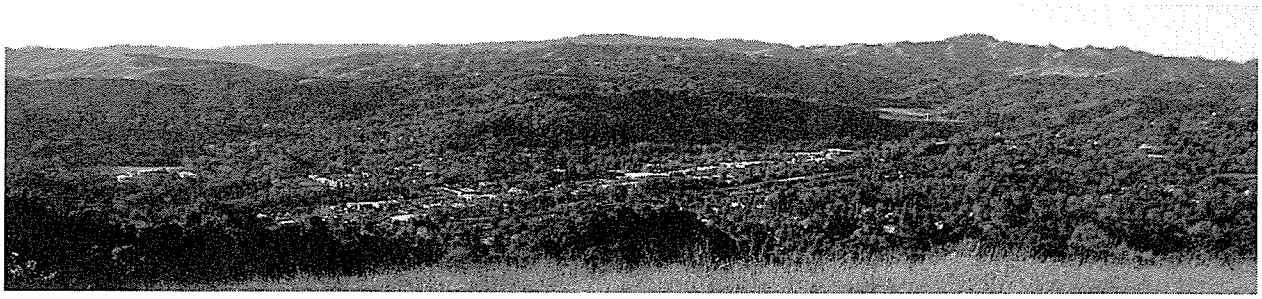
1 "Board" is used here as a generic term for the City Council, commissions, committees, task forces, and other public decision-making boards.



Staff Report

DRAFT
LAFAYETTE DOWNTOWN STRATEGY AND SPECIFIC PLAN

April 13, 2009

City Council / Redevelopment Agency Board
Downtown Strategy Advisory Committee
Planning Commission
Design Review Commission
Circulation Commission
Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission
Senior Services Commission
Environmental Task Force
Creeks Committee

City of Lafayette Staff Report

For: City Council / Redevelopment Agency Board
Downtown Strategy Advisory Committee
Planning Commission
Design Review Commission
Circulation Commission
Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission
Senior Services Commission
Environmental Task Force
Creeks Committee

By: Ann Merideth, Community Development Director

Date Written: April 9, 2009

Meeting Date: April 13, 2009

Subject: Consideration of the Draft Lafayette Downtown Strategy and Specific Plan

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Summary

The City began work on a long-term vision for the downtown in 2006 when the City Council initiated the preparation of the community-based specific plan. This community process included many hours of discussion by dedicated volunteers and a variety of public outreach activities and public information venues over the past 27 months. The result is the Draft Lafayette Downtown Strategy and Specific Plan ("Draft Plan") which was released for public review this past January. Since then, the Advisory Committee and other Committees and Commissions have reviewed the document and developed recommendations to the Agency Board. The public has made comments. The Board will discuss these recommendations and public comments before deciding what revisions should be made in the Draft Plan as it proceeds into environmental review. WRT will begin the discussion with a presentation to the Board, Commissions and Committees, and the public.

Report Organization

This staff report includes the following parts:

- Background
  - Why are we doing a specific plan
  - What is a specific plan
  - Project chronology
  - Roles of the Advisory Committee, other commissions and committees, and the public in the process
- Discussion
  - What is the purpose of the Plan
  - What is not the purpose of the Plan
  - Relationship of the Draft Plan with other City policies
  - Environmental review

- Recommendation
- Attachments
  - Downtown Strategy Advisory Committee Recommendations
  - Planning Commission Recommendations
  - Design Review Commission Recommendations
  - Circulation Commission Recommendations
  - Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission Recommendations
  - Senior Services Commission Recommendations
  - Public Comments

Background

Why are we doing a specific plan

The City Council began the conversation about a downtown specific plan in June 2006. In December 2006 the Council decides to proceed with a community-based plan for the following reasons:

- *Library.* When the Library is completed in November, will be a significant anchor in the downtown, and its educational and cultural programs will bring the community to the downtown. A specific plan will ensure that what happens on parcels around the Library in the future will complement this community asset.

- *General Plan.* The General Plan calls for a number of deliverables for the downtown, including the creation of three distinctive areas – Downtown Core, East End, and West End, establishing urban design guidelines, providing public parking and other amenities, and encouraging housing in the downtown. It also calls for the updating of the specific plans completed more than 20 years ago. A specific plan will be these deliverables.

- *Redevelopment.* Lafayette's Redevelopment Agency is now mature. Once the Library is completed the Agency will have significant funds to invest in downtown public projects. Up to $15-20 million will be available to spend on projects over the next 20 years, with another $30 million for affordable housing. There had never been a community conversation to determine how these $45-50 million in funds should be spent, and the Agency has both a legal and public obligation to develop an expenditure plan. A specific plan will identify redevelopment projects, the priorities, and approximate costs.

- *New Development.* A specific plan will ensure that the City is proactive rather than reactive to new development proposals. While the current economic times have slowed down development, the City continues to review plans for new projects that will be constructed when the economy cycles up, as it inevitably will.

What is a specific plan

The Planner's Guide to Specific Plans from the Governor's Office of Planning and Research provides the best guidance on this type of land use policy document. The following are excerpts:

A specific plan is a tool for the systematic implementation of the general plan. It effectively establishes a link between implementing policies of the general plan and the individual development proposals in a defined area. A specific plan may be as general as setting forth broad policy concepts, or as detailed as providing direction to every facet of development from the type, location and intensity of uses to the design and capacity of infrastructure; from the resources used to finance public improvements to the design guidelines for a subdivision. To an extent, the range of issues that is contained in a specific plan is left to the discretion of the decision-making body. However, all specific plans...must comply with Sections 65450-65457 of the Government Code. These provisions require that a specific plan be consistent with the adopted general plan....In turn, all subsequent

subdivision and development, all public works projects and zoning regulations must be consistent with the specific plan....

Section 65451 of the Government Code mandates that a specific plan be structured as follows:

a. A specific plan shall include a text and a diagram or diagrams which specify all of the following in detail:
   1. The distribution, location and extent of the uses of land, including open space, within the area covered by the plan.
   2. The proposed distribution, location, and extent and intensity of major components of public and private transportation, sewage, water drainage, solid waste disposal, energy, and other essential facilities proposed to be located within the area covered by the plan and needed to support the land uses described in the plan.
   3. Standards and criteria by which development will proceed, and standards for the conservation, development, and utilization of natural resources, where applicable.
   4. A program of implementation measures including regulations, programs, public works projects, and financing measures necessary to carry out paragraphs 1, 2, and 3.
b. The specific plan shall include a statement of the relationship to the general plan.

The specific plan represents a good tool for developing a "sense of place." A creative and innovative specific plan may bridge the gap between monotonous urban development and a livable neighborhood.

The Draft Plan meets the statutory requirements. It describes land uses and open spaces. It shows improvements to the street, pedestrian, and bicycle infrastructure. (Since no other infrastructure, such as new sewers, is proposed, it does not have to be shown.) The Draft Plan includes standards and criteria for development and preservation of natural resources. It includes an implementation strategy.

Project Chronology

Once the decision was made to prepare a plan, the process proceeded over the next 27 months with a variety of events and opportunities for public participation as demonstrated in the following chronology:

2006	
Jun 5	The City Council discussed the preparation of a downtown specific plan as part of its 2006-2007 budget.
Oct 23	The City Council asked that the public be invited to a meeting to discuss the preparation of a downtown specific plan
Dec 11	The City Council hosted a public presentation to discuss the preparation of a specific plan. Invitations to the meeting were sent to all commissions and committees, homeowner associations, other community organizations, and major downtown owners and businesses. Approximately 100 people attended the presentation.
2007	
Jan	*Vistas* (Winter 2007 edition) had a front-page article which announced the start of the downtown planning process. This newsletter has a mail distribution of approximately 11,000 Lafayette residences and businesses.
Feb 12	The selection committee appointed by the City Council interviewed consultant teams at an all-day public meeting. The committee included representatives from the Planning, Design Review, Circulation, Parks, Trails & Recreation, Senior Services, and Youth Commissions, Creeks Committee, Chamber of Commerce, downtown property owners, and Lafayette Homeowners Council. The committee recommended that the Council select the WRT team.

May	*Vistas* (Spring 2007 edition) had a front-page article about the Plan.
May 14	The Redevelopment Agency approved the agreement with WRT.
Jun14	Advisory Committee meeting #1
Jun 20	WRT hosted an all-day public walking tour of the downtown. Members of the Advisory Committee and the public (Chamber of Commerce, Lafayette Homeowners Council) participated.
Jun 25	Project update at Redevelopment Agency meeting
Jun 28	Advisory Committee meeting #2
Aug 23	Advisory Committee meeting #3
Aug	*Vistas* (Summer 2007 edition) had a front-page article about the Plan. It included an invitation to participate in the city-wide survey and Community Workshop #1.
Sep 4	The city-wide survey mailed to 11,000 residences and businesses. The cover letter included an invitation to Community Workshop #1 on September 27. Approximately 2,400 completed surveys (22%) were returned ultimately; the goal was a 10% return.
Sep 10	Project update at the Redevelopment Agency meeting
Sep 27	Community Workshop #1 was held. Approximately 80 people attended. There was an ad and article in the *Sun* announcing the event. Postcard and email invitations were sent to homeowners associations, community organizations, and residents who asked to be notified.
Oct 2	Project update at the Redevelopment Agency meeting
Oct 11	Advisory Committee meeting #4
Nov	*Vistas* (Fall 2007 edition) had a summary of the community-wide survey results.
2008	
Jan 16	Advisory Committee meeting #5
Jan 25	WRT held individual stakeholder meetings with Dennis Erokan (Town Hall Theater), Bart Carr (Sustainable Lafayette), Claude Aiello (BPAC), Pastor Lori Sawdon (Lafayette Methodist Church), Stephen Ware (downtown businesses), Judy Carney (Acalanes High School District), Ann Appert (Lafayette School District), and Caity Meany-Burrows (young families).
Feb 12	Community Workshop #2 was held. Approximately 70-80 people attended. There was ad in the *Sun* announcing the event. Postcard and email invitations were sent to homeowners associations, community organizations, and residents who asked to be notified. Personal letters with invitations to the Workshop were sent to the 60 major downtown property owners and businesses. Personal phone calls were also made to the top five property owners with invitations to the Workshop.
Mar 10	Project discussed at the Environmental Strategy Task Force meeting.
Mar 19	WRT met with the Lafayette Homeowners Council.
Mar 21-22	WRT did intercept interviews around the downtown and at the Community Center.
Mar 21-31	There was a display at the Lafayette Library about the conceptual ideas. The display was advertised with an item in the *Sun*, and postcards and email invitations were sent to 300-400 homeowner associations, community organizations, major downtown property owners and businesses, and residents. The Library receives an average 500 visitors per day.
Apr 22	Advisory Committee meeting #6
May 12	Project discussed at the Environmental Strategy Task Force meeting.
May 21	Advisory Committee meeting #7
Jun	*Vistas* (Spring 2008 edition) had an article about the Plan and climate change.
Jun 17	Advisory Committee meeting #8
Jul 10	Advisory Committee meeting #9
Jul 30	Advisory Committee meeting #10
Jul 31	Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission discussed park goals and policies.
Aug 5	Advisory Committee meeting #11
Aug 20	Advisory Committee meeting #12
Aug 27	Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission discussed park goals and policies.

Sep 11	Advisory Committee meeting #13
Sep 16	Advisory Committee meeting #14
Oct 8	Project update at the Planning Commission meeting
Oct 22	Project discussed at the Environmental Task Force meeting.
Nov 5	Advisory Committee meeting #15
Nov 19	Project discussed at the Environmental Task Force meeting.
Nov 24	Project update at the Redevelopment Agency meeting
Dec 8	Project update at the Redevelopment Agency meeting
Dec 4	Project update at the Planning Commission meeting
Dec 15	Advisory Committee meeting #16
Dec 17	Project discussed at the Environmental Task Force meeting.
2009	
Jan 12	Project update at Redevelopment Agency meeting
Jan 22	Project discussed at the Senior Services Commission
Jan 26	The Draft Plan was released for public review. Hard copies were sent to the City Council, Advisory Committee, Commissions (Planning, Design Review, Circulation, Parks, Trails & Recreation, and Senior Services) Creeks Committee, and Environmental Task Force. The Chamber of Commerce and Lafayette Homeowners Council each received a hard copy and CD. The Draft Plan was downloaded onto the City's website. CDs were available for free at City Offices.
Jan 31	Advisory Committee meeting #17 (all day meeting)
Feb	*Vistas* (Winter 2009 edition) had a front-page article about the Draft Plan with an invitation to Community Workshop #3.
Feb 10	Design Review Commission discussed Draft Plan.
Feb 11	Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission discussed Draft Plan.
Feb 17	Circulation Commission discussed Draft Plan.
Feb 18	Environmental Task Force discussed Draft Plan.
Feb 19	Planning Commission discussed Draft Plan
Feb 21	Advisory Committee meeting #18 (all day meeting)
Feb 24	The Chamber of Commerce hosted a meeting for downtown property owners and businesses to discuss the Draft Plan. Approximately 100 people attended.
Feb 25	Community Workshop # 3 was held with 106 people in attendance. Postcards and email invitations were sent to 300-400 homeowner associations, community organizations, major downtown property owners and businesses, and residents. There was an article in *Lamorinda Weekly* inviting people to the Workshop.
Mar 2	Advisory Committee meeting #19
Mar 2	Circulation Commission discussed Draft Plan.
Mar 3	Advisory Committee meeting #20
Mar 5	Planning Commission meeting discussed Draft Plan
Mar 9	Project update at Redevelopment Agency meeting
Mar 10	Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission discussed Draft Plan.
Mar 10	Design Review Commission discussed Draft Plan.
Mar 17	Advisory Committee meeting #21
Mar 18	Environmental Task Force discussed Draft Plan
Mar 19	Planning Commission discussed Draft Plan
Mar 26	Senior Services Commission discussed Draft Plan
Apr 1	Advisory Committee meeting #22
Apr 2	Planning Commission discussed Draft Plan

Roles of the Advisory Committee, other Commissions and Committees, and the public in the process

When the Council decided to proceed with a specific plan, it wanted the plan to be community-based. This was to ensure that as many people as possible had the opportunity to offer ideas about what their downtown should be in the future, rather than the traditional process of developing a plan through the commissions. The Council also wanted to ensure that all ages were represented and that people not usually involved in planning processes at least were offered opportunities to participate. To accomplish this, there were three "groups" that contributed to the process.

- Downtown Strategy Advisory Committee

  The Advisory Committee started as the selection committee for the consultant. It then evolved into the committee to work with the consultant as the community "sounding board" and one of the important pieces of the community input process. The Advisory Committee represents a broad section of interests and ages:

  - City Council / Redevelopment Agency – Mike Anderson
  - Planning Commission – Tom Chastain
  - Design Review Commission – Tom Lee
  - Circulation Commission – Buck Hughes
  - Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission – Geoff Bellenger
  - Senior Services Commission – Ruth McCahan
  - Youth Commission – Brayton Noll
  - Creeks Committee – Scott Honegger
  - Downtown Street Improvement Master Plan Committee – Erling Horn
  - Chamber of Commerce – Ann Denny
  - Lafayette Library and Learning Center Foundation – Kathy Merchant
  - Lafayette Homeowners Council – Carol Singer
  - Downtown Property Owner / Downtown Business – Steve Cortese
  - Resident-at-Large – Jeanne Ateljevich

  During the concept development phase last spring, the Committee became more involved in the process, and eventually had 22 public meetings (over 90 hours). The Committee discussed land use, circulation, and open space issues, but it also had good discussions about larger, more philosophical issues. What is a small town? How can a commercial area with a regional transit station and next to a freeway be semi-rural? What are the most special characteristics of our downtown that should be preserved? How do you define in words what makes Lafayette's downtown special? The result of all these discussions over long hours is a list of Draft Plan recommendations. The recommendations are attached in Section 3.

- Other Commissions and Committees

  Other Commissions and Committees have discussed the Plan throughout the process as well. These public discussions became more focused once the Draft Plan was released at the end of January for public review. Some prepared recommendations for revising the Draft Plan. Recommendations from the Planning, Design Review, Circulation, Parks, Trails & Recreation, and Senior Services Commissions are attached in Sections 4-8.

- Public

  As demonstrated by the chronology above, the process to develop the Draft Plan has included more public outreach and opportunities for public input than any other project in the City. Over 2,000 people have participated in the process in some way. Public comments that have been received by the City since the

release of the Draft Plan along with the notes from Community Workshop #3 (on February 25) are attached in Section 9.

Discussion

Over the last 27 months, and particularly since January, there have been many questions about the Draft Plan and its impact on the downtown. There also have been questions about the relationship among the Draft Plan and other adopted City policies and about environmental review. This part of the report responds to these questions.

What is the purpose of the Draft Plan

Redevelopment will occur in the downtown over the next 20 years whether or not a plan is approved; the point of the Plan is to guide new development and redevelopment in a way that benefits Lafayette. The Plan thus seeks to amplify the General Plan's goals by providing a more detailed planning and design framework that will guide developers. Therefore, the purpose of the Plan is to accomplish the following:

- Results in a sustainable downtown that reduces dependence on the car, increases opportunities for walking and bicycling, provides opportunities for living in the downtown close to BART, retail services, and cultural and open space amenities, preserves our natural resources, and reduces greenhouse gases.
- Maintains the character of the downtown, but allows for guided redevelopment to enhance that character.
- Continues the public investment in the downtown that has already resulted in streetscape improvements, circulation improvements, the Plaza, Veterans Building, and the new Library.
- Develops community amenities and facilities that complement the downtown.
- Improves circulation in the downtown over the long-term.
- Provides additional off-street parking opportunities for customers and employees.
- Supports a healthy business environment by enhancing the downtown with public investment and guiding private development.
- Provides quality housing choices for all ages and income levels.
- Preserves and enhances the downtown's natural resources.
- Ensures excellent architecture and urban design.

What is not the purpose of the Plan

There has been much misinformation and confusion about the Draft Plan. The following are responses to some of most common questions:

- Does the Draft Plan change the character of the downtown?

  No. The intent of the Draft Plan is summarized in the overall vision statement: *A Downtown that retains its small town charm, is vibrant with pedestrian activity, is safe and comfortable, offers a variety of unique shopping and dining choices and has a unique combination of built form and landscape character in keeping*

with its surrounding natural environment – characterized by oak-studded hillsides, and cool, shady creeks. A Downtown that encourages economic activity beneficial to the community through the encouragement of small local businesses and enhancement of its tax base – generating revenue that continues to enhance and maintain a high quality public space environment.

- Does the Draft Plan force downtown property owners and businesses to redevelop their properties? For example, does the Draft Plan eliminate Diamond K and the Roundup?

  No. The Draft Plan proposes to guide private redevelopment only if and when an owner or business decides to redevelop their property.

- Does the Draft Plan mean the City will use eminent domain to improve creeks or build parks or make other public improvements?

  The City does not have any significant history of using eminent domain for redevelopment purposes, and does not anticipate using eminent domain in the future. If a private development is proposed adjacent to a potential creek enhancement area or in the area of a future park, the City will work with the developer in a public / private partnership to achieve the public improvements as well the private development to the mutual benefit of both.

- Does the Draft Plan mean there will be more affordable housing in the Downtown?

  Yes. Because State law requires it, more affordable housing units will in all likelihood be produced in the downtown with or without the Plan over the next 20 years. The General Plan identifies downtown as the place where more multi-family housing should occur and the General Plan has a goal for more affordable housing. The Redevelopment Plan (and state redevelopment law) requires that at least 15 percent of new housing in the downtown be affordable.

- Does the Draft Plan reduce the allowed amount of commercial uses to accommodate additional residential uses?

  The Draft Plan does not propose a specific number of residential units nor place a cap on the amount of commercial (retail and/or office) uses, so it does not change what is in the General Plan. The Draft Plan could result in more units in the downtown with the proposed increases in density, but the amount ultimately developed will depend on the market demand and what developers are willing to build.

- Does the Draft Plan make traffic congestion worse?

  Growth and more traffic will occur in the downtown with or without the Draft Plan. Traffic studies prepared by the consultant anticipate that congestion will be less under the Draft Plan over the long-term than under the General Plan. This is because the Draft Plan proposes more people to live in the downtown around the BART station and more pedestrian-friendly facilities. These traffic studies will undergo an independent analysis as part of the environmental review process.

- Does the Draft Plan change the process to evaluate new development proposals?

  No. The Draft Plan does not change the process currently in place. The Planning Commission and other commissions and committees will continue to evaluate new development proposals as well as redevelopment projects.

Relationship of the Plan with other City policies

- *General Plan*

  The General Plan is the City's primary land use policy document. All land use decisions must be consistent with the General Plan or the General Plan must be amended before the decision is made. The General Plan articulates the main concepts underlying its policies for the downtown. Each of these concepts is listed below (in italics); following each concept is a brief analysis of the Draft Plan's consistency.

  - *Establish a Downtown Core area along both sides of Mt. Diablo Boulevard bounded by Mountain View Drive, Highway 24 and First Street, as indicated in Map I-3 Downtown. The Downtown Core represents the focus for Lafayette's commercial and cultural life. The policies and programs of this chapter capitalize on the BART Station. They encourage a mixture of retail, office, commercial and residential uses to meet business, service, shopping and dining needs of the community and visitors alike. The Downtown Core should be a pedestrian-friendly and safe environment, both day and night, where residents of the downtown and the community at large can shop, eat and enjoy cultural events.*

    The Draft Plan includes an expanded downtown core with the eastern boundary extending to Second Street and the southern boundary extending south down Moraga Road to St. Mary's Road and including the Golden Gate Way area. This change recognizes the importance of the new Lafayette Library and Learning Center to the downtown, the reuse of the existing Library, Town Hall Theater, and the vacant property at the intersection of Moraga Road and St. Mary's Road. The Draft Plan is consistent with the remainder of this General Plan concept.

  - *Strengthen the West End Commercial Area by continuing the mix of office and office-related service activities. Restaurants, business services, office support activities, lodging and electronic-commerce related uses and improvements are emphasized. Multi-family residential use is also supported in this area.*

    The Draft Plan does not propose any changes to the types of uses in the West End, and it supports mixed use, multifamily residential.

  - *Improve the appearance and function of the East End Commercial Area by supporting the consolidation and redevelopment of under-performing properties. Identify design policies and improvement opportunities to upgrade the appearance of the corridor.*

    The Draft Plan supports the consolidation and redevelopment of underperforming properties within the East End District. It proposes streetscape improvements in the East End and Gateway districts.

  - *Address the unique needs and functions of distinct commercial areas by establishing "character areas" with specific policies and programs for the Golden Gate Way, Brown Avenue, the Park Hotel, Plaza Way, the BART Block and Shield Block. The Downtown Core and surrounding commercial area should thrive as an integrated whole, each part supporting and encouraging the other.*

    The Draft Plan is based on a series of interconnected districts that complement each other as well as the larger downtown area. Each district is based on its existing character and uses, and the Draft Plan proposes that character of each district be used as the guide for its redevelopment. Each of the character areas listed in the General Plan is included in these districts. The Draft Plan also shows how certain areas – opportunity areas – could be redeveloped if and when the property owners decide to redevelop.

- *Continue to encourage multifamily residential uses downtown.*

  The Draft Plan proposes the development of mixed use residential and multifamily residential.

- *Establish urban design guidelines to improve the appearance of future development downtown. The guidelines should address the location and design of buildings and parking areas, protection of scenic views, signage, landscaping, pedestrian access, public open space and related amenities.*

  The Draft Plan proposes policies related to design guidelines and standards.

- *Provide additional public amenities Downtown, such as distinctive lighting, public parking, open space and pedestrian paths.*

  The Draft Plan proposes streetscape improvements, public parking, open space, and improved pedestrian circulation.

- *Implement limited circulation changes to accommodate traffic on Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Moraga Road.*

  The Draft Plan does not propose major changes to Mount Diablo Boulevard or Moraga Road. It does propose streetscape improvements on a number of streets, including these two arterials.

- *Increase retail sales tax revenues by capturing a greater percentage of the regional market and by encouraging people to stop in Lafayette for shopping, personal services, and entertainment.*

  The Draft Plan proposes an increase in height limits in certain areas along Mount Diablo Boulevard. This increase in height is to allow higher ceilings in first floor retail spaces which are desired by high quality retailers. Attracting these types of retail users could provide more reasons for existing businesses to redevelop their properties and new businesses to locate in Lafayette.

- *Increase the property tax base though infrastructure improvements and renewed private and public investment Downtown.*

  The Draft Plan proposes public improvements to complement private redevelopment investment. The proposed increase in height and density in certain areas could make private redevelopment more cost-efficient.

- *Preserve and enhance historic sites and structures.*

  The Draft Plan proposes the preservation and reuse of buildings and places with historical and cultural significance.

The General Plan includes the following statements related to the downtown:

- *Downtown Core: This designation is intended to accommodate a mix of uses in a pedestrian-friendly environment. The Downtown Core, the center of Lafayette, is a place where the community can shop, eat and enjoy cultural events. The height limit in the Downtown Core is 35 feet. Additional height, not to exceed 45 feet, may be permitted in certain designated areas between Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Highway 24. The maximum density for multi-family residential uses is 35 units per acre.*

The Draft Plan proposes a mix of uses in the downtown core. The Draft Plan proposes to raise the building height limit in certain areas along Mount Diablo Boulevard. In these areas, 42.5 feet conditionally is the proposed height limit with additional setbacks and stepbacks. It proposes to raise the number of stories to four for transit-oriented residential projects along the northern half of blocks that are adjacent to the freeway. Building height would be determined from the BART platform. The Draft Plan proposes an increase in density to 45 units per acre along Mount Diablo Boulevard in certain areas and in the residential area south of Mount Diablo Boulevard and to 65 units per acre for the transit-oriented residential development adjacent to the freeway

- *West End Commercial: This designation is intended to accommodate primarily office and other uses that complement the adjacent Downtown Core. The height limit in the West End Commercial designation is of 35 feet. The maximum density for multi-family residential uses is 35 units per acre.*

  The Draft Plan proposes a mix of retail, office and residential uses. The height limit is 35 feet, and the density is 35 units per acre.

- *East End Commercial: Presently, this area contains a mix of uses: retail, auto-oriented commercial, hotel and offices. Because the area lacks a clear identity or focus, a long-range vision and plan are proposed to improve the look and performance of this area within the City's overall commercial sector. The height limit is 35 feet. The maximum density for multi-family residential uses is 35 units per acre.*

  The Draft Plan proposes a long-range vision and plan for the East End and Gateway Districts. It proposes a mix of retail, including auto-oriented commercial uses and residential uses. The height limit is 35 feet except in the Gateway District along Mount Diablo Boulevard where the Draft Plan proposes a conditional 42.5 feet. The density is 35 units per acre in the East End District, and 45 units per acre is proposed for the Gateway District.

The General Plan does anticipate further planning study would occur in the downtown.

- *Program LU-10.5.1: Continue to implement and update specific plans for character areas.*

  The Draft Plan incorporates and updates the BART Block, Shield Block / La Fiesta Square, Plaza Specific Plans, as discussed below in the next section.

- *Program LU-10.2.1: Prepare a specific plan to identify areas where structures would be allowed up to 45 feet in height between Mt. Diablo Boulevard and Highway 24. Such a plan would establish findings such as the following:*

  The design:
  - *demonstrates exceptional design;*
  - *is compatible with adjacent properties;*
  - *is sensitive to the residential areas surrounding the Downtown;*
  - *does not block identified viewsheds;*
  - *enhances the creek area, as applicable; and*
  - *constitutes a substantial public benefit to the community.*

  The Draft Plan is a specific plan, and it proposes additional building height in certain areas between Mount Diablo Boulevard and Highway 24. It also proposes additional height in other areas of the downtown.

- *Program LU-11.1.1: Develop a long-range plan that establishes a vision for the future of the East End Commercial Area, based on the community's overall vision for Lafayette, its vision for the Downtown Core, and on future trends in commercial, retail and auto-oriented land use activities.*

  The Draft Plan proposes a long-range vision for the East End that is consistent with the vision for the entire downtown. A mix of uses is proposed.

In terms of amounts of land uses, the Draft Plan does not quantify the amounts of residential, retail or office that could result. The General Plan buildout numbers are not changed by the Draft Plan.

In summary, the Draft Plan proposes the following amendments to the General Plan:

	General Plan	**Draft Plan**
Land Use Map		Adjust map to match Draft Plan boundary, District names and boundaries
Land Use descriptions		Add District descriptions
Senior residential land use	Not defined	Establish land use designation for senior / assisted living / active adult *(Note: There is an amendment to the General Plan proposing this change that is being prepared separate from the Draft Plan.)*
Density	35 dwelling units / acre	35 du/ac Exceptions: ▫ *Downtown Retail District*: 45 du/ac for Mt. Diablo Blvd, frontage mixed use; 65 du/ac for transit oriented residential at back of blocks next to Hwy 24. ▫ *Downtown Civic and Cultural District*: 45 du/ac for Mt. Diablo Blvd, frontage mixed use ▫ *Downtown Residential District*: 45 du/ac small scale residential infill ▫ *Gateway District*: 45 du/ac for Mt. Diablo Blvd. frontage
Building height	35' 45' may be permitted in designated areas between Mt. Diablo Blvd and Hwy 24 in the Downtown Core. Prepare a specific plan to identify areas where structures would be allowed up to 45' between Mt. Diablo Blvd and Hwy 24 and establish findings such as following: ▫ Demonstrates exceptional design ▫ Is compatible with adjacent properties ▫ Is sensitive to the residential areas surrounding the Downtown ▫ Does not block identified viewsheds ▫ Enhances the creek area, as applicable ▫ Constitutes a substantial public benefit to the community	35' Exceptions: ▫ *Downtown Retail District*: Allow 4th residential story for transit-residential development in the back of blocks north of Mt Diablo Blvd next to Hwy 24 with maximum height regulated by BART platform sightlines to hills; 42.5' conditionally allowed along Mt. Diablo Blvd frontage with 15' combined setback / stepback for mixed use ▫ *Downtown Civic and Cultural District*: Allow 4th residential story for transit-residential development in the back of blocks north of Mt Diablo Blvd next to Hwy 24 with maximum height regulated by BART platform sightlines to hills; 42.5' conditionally allowed along Mt.

	General Plan	Draft Plan
		Diablo Blvd frontage with 15' combined setback / stepback for mixed use ▫ *Gateway District*: 42.5' conditionally allowed along Mt. Diablo Blvd frontage with 15' combined setback / stepback for mixed use Allow 3 stories in 35' limit
FAR	0.4: Administrative / professional office and multi-family residential 0.75: Community facilities and civic uses 0.25: Public utilities	No FARs

If the Final Plan includes the changes proposed in the Draft Plan, an amendment to the General Plan is required before the Final Plan can be adopted. The General Plan is not a static document, and it anticipates that changes may be made.

Although the General Plan covers a long-range period, it remains a flexible and dynamic document. This revision of the Plan is based on estimates of future growth and development, as projected in the late-1990's. As time passes, certain assumptions underlying the Plan may no longer be valid due to changing circumstances or new information. The City should monitor its General Plan to ensure that it remains in touch with its evolving community. The California Government Code (§ 65400[b]) requires each planning department to report annually to the City Council "on the status of the plan and progress in its implementation, including the progress in meeting its share of regional housing needs determinations." This report is also made to the State Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD).

It is recommended that every five years, the City review the entire General Plan to determine whether it still reflects community concerns and goals. This could coincide with the five-year review and update schedule of the Housing Chapter as required by State housing law.

- Specific Plans

About 20 years ago, three policy documents were adopted as specific plans for certain areas of the downtown. These were areas that were expected to redevelop sooner than other parts of the downtown. The Draft Plan proposes to incorporate, update and supersede these three specific plans. The following are summaries of each of these plans in comparison with the Draft Plan.

- *Plaza Park*

  This Specific Plan was adopted in 1987, and it ultimately became the basis for the redevelopment of the Plaza area. The planning area boundary is Mount Diablo Boulevard to the north, Moraga Road to the west, Moraga Boulevard to the south, and First Street to the east. A summary of the standards includes:

  - This is the symbolic center of Lafayette.
  - The park has the potential as a significant public park, supported by adjacent retail and entertainment facilities.
  - It has value as a visual focal point for pedestrians and motorists.
  - It could be a place where people will congregate for social purposes, for pauses during shopping, after or before entertainment, or for short periods away from work.
  - It is an opportunity to focus and highlight the historical significance of the buildings in the area.
  - It provides principles for the park itself.

- The creek edges provide opportunities as walkway corridors or as sites which through redevelopment could provide for landscaped public amenities.
- The small scale village historical character of the Plaza Park block area should be preserved.
- The height, design and architectural treatment of all the buildings along the edges of the streets should be presented to complement the pedestrian scale and historical character of the area.
- Variations in building height are desired.
- Buildings near the sidewalk should be limited to one or two stories so that prevailing view from the street is of one- or two-story facades and roof area. Height of new buildings should be scaled in relationship to existing structures in the area.

The Draft Plan is compatible with these principles, except for building height:

	Specific Plan	Draft Plan
Building height	1-2 stories near the sidewalk	35'; 42.5' conditionally allowed along Mt. Diablo Blvd with 15' combined setback / stepback

- *BART Block*

This Specific Plan was adopted in 1986, and it has guided the Town Center redevelopment since then. The planning area boundary is BART to the north, Oak Hill Road to the east, Mount Diablo Boulevard to the south, and just beyond Happy Valley Road to the west. The development strategy and image for this area is a focal point of the downtown retail commercial area, and it should be developed in a manner to strengthen this recognition of retail shopping orientation, bolstered by office and residential uses. The location of the BART station dictates also that is a place oriented to transportation. A summary of the major use and development standards include:

- Establish overlay zones or other requirements to favor residential use.
- The ground floor should be preserved for pedestrian-oriented retails sales, and, where appropriate, residential uses.
- Office uses in interior of the block may be allowed.
- Along Mount Diablo Boulevard, building height and architectural treatment should be of small scale village character.
- Buildings near the sidewalk should be limited to two stories.
- Variations in height are desired.
- Visibility of the ridgeline and hills south of the downtown should be maintained as viewed from Highway 24, from the southern BART entrance, and along the creek.
- A pedestrian ambiance along the creek corridor should be maintained.
- On the remainder of the block, 35 feet will be the height limit.
- Some three story buildings, higher than 35 feet, may be approved where the sense of height is not present or the background or topographic circumstances mitigate the sense of height.
- Greater height shall be considered a privilege.
- Preserve, reclaim, and enhance Happy Valley Creek.
- Provide a trail on EBMUD right-of-way.
- A minimum of 20 percent shall be retained as open space or contribute to off-site pedestrian amenities.
- Plazas, recesses or arcaded spaces that create wider sidewalks are encouraged.
- Buildings should relate to existing buildings and natural features.
- Buildings shall be informal in scale, and, along Mount Diablo Boulevard and the creek, maintain a small scale village character.
- Street level frontage stores should be visually penetrable.

- Façade treatment should include varied fenestration, building planes and/or building materials.
- Use natural materials.
- Provide a park-like atmosphere to the interior of the block.
- Sunlight onto the plazas and corridors must be maintained.

The Draft Plan proposes many elements that are compatible with these standards. However, it does propose a change in height limits and it does not include more specific design standards.

	Specific Plan	**Draft Plan**
Residential uses	Establish zones or other requirements which would favor residential	No change
Ground level uses	Pedestrian-oriented retail or restaurant uses and, where appropriate, residential uses	No change
Building height	▫ 2 stories next to Mt. Diablo Blvd and into the block so that prevailing view from street is 2 stories; 3 stories allowed with setback of 3rd story ▫ 35' – remainder of the block ▫ 3 story buildings, higher than 35 feet, of small bulk may be approved in areas where the height is not present or background or topographic circumstances mitigate the sense of height	35' Exceptions: ▫ Allow 4th residential story for transit-residential development in the back of blocks north of Mt Diablo Blvd next to Hwy 24 with maximum height regulated by BART platform sightlines to hills ▫ 42.5' conditionally allowed along Mt. Diablo Blvd frontage with 15' combined setback / stepback for mixed use.
Open space	Minimum of 20% of project area. Properties not having appropriate area should contribute to off-site pedestrian amenities through establishment of district, etc.	No change
Setbacks	None specified	0' minimum; 10' maximum
Design Standards	Includes specific design standards	Develop architectural guidelines for the downtown

▫ *Shield Block*

This Specific Plan was adopted in 1988, and it served as the guiding document for the redevelopment of La Fiesta and around Lafayette Circle. The plan boundaries are Mount Diablo Boulevard to the north, Moraga Road to the east, Lafayette Creek to the south, and the rear lot lines of the western leg of Lafayette Circle. The community goals for this area include:

- Provide an exceptionally attractive clustered retail shopping area which will entice the pedestrian shopper.
- Enhance the creekside setting as a focus and unique feature of the area and as a pedestrian amenity.
- Coordinate development among owners.
- Establish design guidelines and promote efficiency of space and outstanding design.

A summary of the use and development standards and architectural criteria include:

- Uses must be consistent with the purpose of the SRB District.
- Ground floors should be preserved for pedestrian oriented retails sales uses.
- Permits for offices are limited to no more than 50 percent of the total floor area and are not allowed on the ground level.
- Buildings should relate well to existing buildings and natural features.
- Buildings shall be small and informal in scale.
- Building clusters with courtyards, etc should be encouraged.
- Where larger building forms are permitted, the forms are to be broken up to lessen the mass.
- Use natural materials.
- Buildings should display windows facing the interior of the block as well as the street to foster interior block flow.
- Coordination among owners to provide interconnected parking areas is encouraged.
- Offset the stagnant effect of office-parking.
- Parking lots should be designed to be landscaped and uninhibiting to the pedestrian.
- Coordinated provision of street furniture is desired.

The Draft Plan is consistent with the goals and most of standards. The exceptions are height, land uses, and specific design standards.

	Specific Plan	**Draft Plan**
Height	2 stories next to Mt. Diablo Blvd and into the block so that prevailing view from street is 1-2 stories	35' Exception: 42.5' conditionally allowed along Mt. Diablo Blvd with 15' combined setback / stepback
Setbacks	No or very limited setbacks along Mt. Diablo Blvd.	No change (0' minimum; 10' maximum)
Land uses	Ground floor for pedestrian-oriented retail; office conditionally allowed to a maximum of 50% of total floor area and not on ground floor	Ground floor for retail; office or residential above ground floor.
Design standards	Includes specific design standards	Develop architectural guidelines for the downtown

- Zoning Ordinance

The Draft Plan proposes to change the height limit as described above, reduce the on-site parking requirements for certain projects near the BART station, reduce some front and side setback standards, and allow the transfer of the open space requirement to fund public open space improvements in the downtown. The Draft Plan does not propose changes to allowed uses in the downtown.

	Ordinance	**Draft Plan**
Zoning Districts	C, SRB, RB, C-1, MRA, MRO, MRB, MRP, MRT	Maintain the same zoning districts underlying the character districts, except combine SRB and RB, and change MRT to MRA
Land Uses		No changes

Parking	Office: 4 spaces / 1,000 sf	Office: Zone #1[1] – 2.5 spaces / 1,000 sf Zone #2 – 3.0 spaces / 1,000 sf Zone #3 – No change
	Retail: Retail -- 4 spaces / 1,000 sf Restaurant -- 1 space / 45 sf of dining	Retail: Zone #1 – 3.0 spaces / 1,000 sf (max) Zone #2 – 3.5 spaces / 1,000 sf (max) Zone #3 – 3.5 spaces / 1,000 sf (max)
	Residential: 1 bedroom – 1 space/unit 2 bedrooms – 1.2 space / unit 3+ bedrooms – 1.5 space / unit Guest—1 space / 5 units	Residential: Zone #1 – 1.0 space / du, on-street guest Zone #2 – 1.2 space / du Zone #3 – No change In C-1, parking for 3rd floor residential to be determined
Height	RB: 35' SRB: 35' (in the BART Block (1) within 25' of Mt. Diablo Blvd., no building may exceed 2 stories or 35', (2) exception may be made for building more than 25 feet from Mt Diablo Blvd to be more than 35' but not more than 3 stories if findings made)) C: 35' C-1: 35' nor more than 2-1/2 stories; 3rd story allowed for residential use when 3rd story is setback more than 50' from street or adjacent residential	See the proposed changes in the General Plan table above
Setbacks	RB: None; 10' if residential adjacent SRB: None; 10' for residential use or if residential is adjacent C: None; sideyards for 3-stories are 20' C-1: 10' minimum	Front : 0' minimum; 10' maximum Exception in C-1: 5' Sideyard: 0' or 5'
Open space	RB: 20% SRB: 20% C: No requirement C-1: No requirement	Allow transfer of open space requirement into a fund to be used for capital open space projects in the Downtown

- Redevelopment Plan

  The Redevelopment Project area includes approximately 290 acres of the Draft Plan's 308 acres. The Redevelopment Plan was adopted in 1994, and it sets forth objectives for the redevelopment of the downtown:

  - *Stimulate and encourage revitalization of the Project Area*
  - *Eliminate conditions of blight*

[1] Zone 1: Downtown Retail District, Zone 2: West End District, Downtown Residential District, Downtown Civic and Cultural District, Zone 3: East End District, Gateway District

- *Prevent the recurrence of blighting conditions*
- *Implement the goals and policies of the General Plan*

The purposes for downtown redevelopment are to accomplish the following:

- *Eliminate blighting influences which exist in the Project Area, including, without limitation, dilapidated and deteriorating buildings, incompatible and uneconomic land uses, subdivided lots of irregular form and shape and inadequate size for proper usefulness that are in multiple ownership, depreciated or stagnant property values or impaired investments, residential overcrowding and other physical and economic deficiencies.*

The Draft Plan proposes a number of public improvements that will eliminate blight. These include streetscape improvements and filling in sidewalk gaps. The Draft Plan also proposes incentives to facilitate private development if and when owners are interested in redeveloping their properties.

- *Encourage the redevelopment of the Project Area subject to and consistent with the City's General Plan and/or Specific Plans as may be adopted from time to time through the cooperation of private enterprise and public agencies and to promote the goals and policies of the General Plan.*

  The Draft Plan encourages, but does not require, redevelopment of the downtown. As shown above, the Draft Plan guides future public and private redevelopment consistent with most of the General Plan and specific plans.

- *Enhance the long-term economic well-being of the community.*

  The Draft Plan proposes public investment in the downtown that will result in streetscape improvements, public parking, and public amenities. This investment will enhance the downtown, which in turn will result in more private investment. Public and private redevelopment will increase the economic benefits to the community.

- *Provide for the rehabilitation of commercial structures and residential dwelling units located within the Project Area.*

  The Draft Plan includes a policy and action that specifically provide for rehabilitation of existing structures.

- *Provide public infrastructure improvements and community facilities, such as the installation, construction, and/or reconstruction of streets, utilities, public buildings and facilities (such as facilities for pedestrian circulation, bikeways and parking facilities), storm drains, utility undergrounding, or structures, street lighting, landscaping and other improvements which are necessary for the effective redevelopment of the Project Area.*

  The Draft Plan proposes a variety of public improvements, such as streetscape improvements, new parks, creek enhancement, and new public facilities.

- *Promote the enhancement of the Mount Diablo Boulevard corridor to achieve the concepts envisioned in the General Plan.*

  The Draft Plan does propose the enhancement of Mount Diablo Boulevard, both in the public realm and the private realm.

- *Provide for participation in the redevelopment of property in the Project Area by owners who agree to so participate in conformity with the Redevelopment Plan.*

  The Draft Plan proposes as a strategy the use of incentives to engage private property owners when owners are interested in redevelopment of their properties. The goal is public / private partnerships that achieve redevelopment with mutual benefits for all.

- *Encourage joint efforts and cooperative efforts among property owners, businesses owners, businesses and public agencies to satisfy off-street parking requirements.*

  The Draft Plan proposes strategies for providing off-street parking.

- *Increase, improve and preserve the community's supply of affordable housing.*

  The Draft Plan proposes additional opportunities for housing in the downtown and, as required, at least 15 percent of the units will be affordable.

- *Provide a procedural and financial mechanism by which the Agency can assist, complement and coordinate public and private development, redevelopment, revitalization, and enhancement of the community.*

  The Draft Plan proposes public and private redevelopment through a variety of financial tools.

- Environmental Strategy

  The Environmental Strategy's mission statement is:

  The City of Lafayette is committed to developing and implementing environmental policies and programs that will enable the City and its residents to meet their present needs without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their needs. Consistent with this statement, the Strategy include guiding principles and goals, including the principle that the importance of environmental sustainability should be considered in City policy and decisions.*

  The Strategy's first Guiding Principle is: *The importance of environmental sustainability* should be considered in City policy and decisions.*

  "Environmental sustainability" means meeting the present needs of the community without sacrificing the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. An environmentally sustainable community is one that improves and enhances its natural, social and economic resources in ways that allow current and future members of the community to lead healthy, productive and satisfying lives.

  The Draft Plan includes a chapter about sustainability and addressing greenhouse gas emissions resulting from development. It repeats General Plan goals and policies related to sustainability. The Draft Plan proposes improvements for pedestrian and bicycle accessibility, and more housing around the BART station.

- Bikeways Master Plan

  Within the planning area, the Bikeways Master Plan shows a proposed bike path along the EBMUD aqueduct right-of-way between Risa Road and Brown Avenue subject to a feasibility study regarding street crossings and areas of steep topography. Within the downtown core, it proposes a downtown bypass route using Mountain View, Bickerstaff, Dewing, Hough, Lafayette Circle, Moraga Road, and Golden Gate Way.

The Draft Plan includes a policy and actions for the implementation of the Bikeways Master Plan, and supports its bicycle facilities and programs.

- Walkways Plan

  The Walkways Plan includes a number of planned walkways within the planning area. These are primarily the gaps in the sidewalk system.

  The Draft Plan proposes to complete the sidewalk gaps as a priority project. It also proposes additional paths and sidewalks throughout the planning area to facilitate pedestrian circulation.

Environmental review

The revised Draft Plan will undergo environmental review. A program or master EIR will be prepared pursuant to CEQA; this process will begin as soon as the Agency Board decides on a list of revisions. More information about the EIR process, including the selection of a consultant, will be provided to the Board at a subsequent meeting.

The Planner's Guide to Specific Plans, cited above, also provides guidance on CEQA and specific plans:

Adoption of a specific plan is a project subject to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). As such, the specific plan normally requires the preparation and consideration of an environmental impact report (EIR) disclosing the potential significant environmental effects of the plan, plan alternatives, and the means by which possible environmental damage may be reduced or avoided....The information in the EIR provides decision makers with the insight necessary to guide policy development, thereby ensuring the plan's policies will address and provide the means by which to avoid potential impacts to the environment....

To the extent feasible, the process of preparing the specific plan and the environmental analysis should proceed concurrently because both documents require many of the same studies and resulting information. As the name implies, a specific plan EIR should contain analyses specific enough to reflect the level of detail in the plan.

A specific plan cannot be adopted until the environmental review document is certified as adequate as defined by CEQA guidelines.

Recommendations

Staff will provide its recommendations in advance of the May 9 meeting.

The Agency Board should 1) receive the presentation by WRT, 2) discuss the Draft Plan with the Commissions, Committees, and WRT, 3) receive public comments, and 4) continue the discussion to a special Agency meeting on Saturday, May 9, 2009.

Attachments

Section 1 is this staff report.

Section 2: Staff Recommendations *(to be added later)*

Section 3: Downtown Strategy Advisory Committee Recommendations and Meeting Notes

Section 4: Planning Commission Recommendations, Meeting Minutes, and other attachments

Section 5: Design Review Commission Recommendations and Meeting Minutes

Section 6: Circulation Commission Recommendations

Section 7: Parks, Trails & Recreation Commission Recommendations

Section 8: Senior Services Commission Recommendations

Section 9: Public Comments (through April 8, 2009) and Community Workshop #3 Notes

Section 10: April 13, 2009 Joint Meeting Minutes *(to be added later)*

SECTION 2:
STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

To be added later